

Alberta



TrailTracker

Alberta TrailNet Newsletter



Issue Eleven Spring 2009

National Trails Coalition Applauds Government of Canada Investment in Trails Infrastructure

Leaders of the National Trails Coalition (NTC) are pleased that the Government of Canada is injecting \$25 million into the construction of trail infrastructure across the nation over the coming year.

Speaking from Wilmot, Nova Scotia, Prime Minister Harper stated "These new trail projects will create immediate short term jobs in communities throughout Canada and open up new opportunities for the tourism industry here in Nova Scotia and Canada-wide."

The National Trails Coalition was formed in 2007 to bring a broad spectrum of trail-based activities together in a collaborative manner to support local and regional initiatives and help build, maintain and promote trails and responsible trail use across Canada. The Coalition has three partners - the Canadian Trails



Prime Minister Stephen Harper with Wayne Rock, President, ATV Association of Nova Scotia and a member of the Nova Scotia Trail Patrol.

"The funds announced in today's Budget will allow us to undertake a nation-wide trail building program that will make trail use safer, stimulate tourism and create jobs," said National Trails Coalition Chairman and Canadian Trails Federation Past President, Terry Norman. "This is a major boost to all forms of trail-based tourism and recreational activities."

"The Off Highway Vehicle sector welcomes the partnership offered by the Minister of Finance in his Budget," said Bob Ramsay, President of the Canadian Off-Highway Vehicle Distributors Council (COHV). "The \$25 million investment will significantly increase the level of trail building in the coming year and it will create a heightened level of cooperation among trail user groups as they rally

behind a common purpose."

Dennis Burns, Executive Director of the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organizations (CCSO), said, "This is tremendous news for the trails community across Canada, particularly in rural and northern areas where trail-based activities play such an important role in the local economy. We salute the government's recognition that trails are not only important for peoples' health and wellbeing but they are also good business."

Further details regarding this funding program will be released as soon as they are available.



Left to right: Neil Jenkins, Nova Scotia Off-Road Riders Association; Steve McLellan, President, Snowmobile Association of Nova Scotia; Prime Minister Stephen Harper; James Frank, President, Annapolis County Trails Society; Terry Norman, President, NS Trails & Canadian Trails Federation; Wayne Rock, President, ATVANS; Rick Jacques, Regional Trails Coordinator, Annapolis Valley Trails Coalition.



The Prime Minister enjoys a day out on the trail with cross country skiers and snowshoers.

Riverland Challenge 2009

By Sheila Thompson

The first annual Riverland Challenge was such a success that the following day, one of the participants made a generous donation to kick start Riverland Challenge Two. The second annual event will be held on **Saturday, May 30, 2009**. This year's circuit includes the following: Canoes will set out from Elk Point's River Park for a 10 km paddle to the Fort George – Buckingham House historic site. Then comes a 5 km run / hike through the two fort sites, followed by 15 km of out-and-back cycling along a quiet, paved country lane. In addition, participants have the option of attempting various fur-trade related 'challenges'. These are provided mainly for the amusement of spectators along the route although prizes will be awarded. Prizes will also be presented for oldest team, youngest team, and best costumes.

Those who are returning for the second Riverland Challenge will have special bibs designating them as original challengers. If you are interested in a day that combines beautiful landscapes in a historic setting, then go to riverlandchallenge.ca, or phone 780-645-2913 for more info.



Trail Events

Canmore Trails Weekend, June 5 to 7, 2009. Phone 403-678-1513 for more information.

15th Annual Songbird Festival, June 6 and 7, 2009 at the Boreal Centre for Bird Conservation, Slave Lake Provincial Park. Includes a 5 or 10 K Bird Fund Trail Run/Walk. Phone 780-849-8236 for more information or visit www.borealbirdcentre.ca/Events_Calendar.pdf.

International Trails Day, June 6, 2009. List your events at www.internationaltrailsday.com.

The Moose Adventure Challenge, June 20, 2009 at Moose Lake Provincial Park. Includes 5 K Canoe, 15 K Bike, 5 K Run. Phone 780-826-3381/780-826-4065 or www.town.bonnyville.ca for more information.

Magnificent River Rats Festival, June 26 and 27, 2009 at the Town of Athabasca Riverfront. Live music, parade, heritage tours, Red River cart races, marketplace and more. Contact 780-675-2230 or check out www.RiverRatsFestival.com.

Parks Day 2009, Saturday July 18, 2009. For more information visit www.parksday.ca.

Slave River Paddlefest 2009, August 1, 2009. Fun and spectator-friendly kayak competitions on the Mountain Portage Rapids. Events for beginner through advanced whitewater kayakers. For more information call 867- 872-2847 or visit fskayak.webs.com/slaveriverpaddlefest.htm.

Grouard Peace River Trail Net Society 'Trail Day', August 15, 2009 at 1 pm at the Hillard's Bay Park near High Prairie, AB. Phone 780 523-4108 for more information.

Visit www.albertatrailnet.com for future updates

CANMORE WALKING WEEKEND

Sat/Sun 20 - 21, June, 2009

Midsummer Days' Rambles
Step out and touch
Canmore's natural scenery !

Group hikes, open and free to all hikers, are planned on local trails on both days:

- One day-long hike (5 - 7 hours)
- One half-day hike (3 - 4 hours).

Group limit of 20 on each trip

On this annual event, hiking clubs everywhere are invited to plan their own trips on the wide range of trails available

For further information, please email trailminders@yahoo.ca



TRAILMINDERS OF THE BOW VALLEY
P.O. Box 8063, Canmore Alberta
T1W 2T8 Tel/Fax 403-678-5551

Iron Horse Ultra 100 Race

May 8 – 10th, 2009

The Iron Horse Ultra 100 is taking place in the scenic Northeastern Alberta wilderness in the County of St. Paul. The race course loops through the Lakeland region with the North Saskatchewan River as a backdrop for portions of the run and utilizes parts of Alberta's Iron Horse Trail, snowmobile trails and the back country trails of Moose Mountain. As a part of the Alberta Ultra Series, the Iron Horse Ultra 100 will test the endurance of all runners. All the challenges of a Mountain course without the Altitude!!!

The Iron Horse Ultra 100 starts at 6:00am to allow enough time to finish within the 30 hour time limit. The starting point is located at the infamous St. Paul's UFO Landing Pad and contestants make their

way along local lakes to the river and into the Town of Elk Point. This is a transfer point for the relays and a separation point for the 100 km. and the 100 mile racers. The finish line is back at the St. Paul Staging Area and RV Park.

Contestants and visitors can expect an action packed weekend. The Iron Horse Ultra Race kicks off Friday night with a Dinner, Meet & Greet Social and local entertainment. On Saturday, enjoy the kid's games and a silent auction while doing some shopping at the St. Paul Farmers' Market. A 5 km. Kid's Fun Run is scheduled for Sunday and the entire event wraps up with an Awards Ceremony.

For more information on the Iron Horse Ultra Race, registration, accommodation, camping and attractions, call 888-645-4155 / 780-645-4363 or visit www.albertaslakeland.com or www.ironhorserun.ca.

Provincial Trail Map Project

Alberta TrailNet and its project partners have now started work on the next 3 maps in a 12-14 provincial trail map series.

The Provincial Trail Map Project will provide helpful information to assist

land-use, and recreational access planning and design.

A provincial trail database will also be developed from information gathered under this program. This will eventually become the central database for all trails in the province.

The Provincial Trail Map Project will support the proposed Recreation Corridor and Trails Designation Program. The next regions of the province to be developed simultaneously are; Grande Alberta North, Grande



Alberta South and Jasper/Wilmore. In conjunction with the development of the maps, AB TrailNet is working closely with the committee on a provincial trail data base being spearheaded by SRD. This will eventually become the central data base for all trails in the province.

We are currently in the stakeholder outreach phase of the project, contacting all communities and trail operators to inform them about this exciting project. Data collection and field work will commence soon, with the goal of having all

three maps ready for distribution in 18 months. For more information about the project, please contact James Clark at 403-464-9492 or 1-877-987-2457. You can also email James at james.h.clark@shaw.ca.

Northeast Alberta Trail Map Project wins “Friends of Tourism” ALTO Award

Alberta TrailNet Society and project partners celebrated upon receiving the “Friends of Tourism” Alto Award for the Northeast Alberta Trail Map Project at the 2008 Alberta Tourism Awards. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the eighth annual Travel Alberta Industry conference in Banff in October. Linda Strong-Watson, Executive Director of TrailNet, accepted the award from Hon. Cindy Ady, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation on behalf of the Map Project Steering Committee.

The NE Alberta Trail Map showcases approved trails in the map region, providing trail location and type of use information that will enable Albertans to make responsible choices and access a variety of trail experiences. Natural areas, points of interest and unique tourism opportunities are featured in this easy-to-follow publication.

The map is a result of a collaborative effort between Alberta TrailNet, Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development,

Alberta Snowmobile Association and the Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association. Regional tourism associations (Alberta’s Lakeland, Kalyna Country, Athabasca Country), municipalities, trail associations and clubs, local businesses and individuals provided assistance that was critical to the project’s success.

The map has received positive feedback from the public and tourism groups with 23,000 maps already distributed. If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the Northeast Alberta Trails Map, please contact TrailNet’s office at 1-877-987-2457/780-422-7150 or email atnadmin@telus.net.



Project partners for the Northeast Alberta Trail Mapping Project pause for an ALTO Award photo op with Hon. Cindy Ady, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation (TPR). Left to Right: Shannon Maliteare (TrailNet), Louise Sherren (Alberta Snowmobile Association), Loren Winnick (TPR), Betty Anne Graves (TrailNet), Linda Strong-Watson (TrailNet), Minister Cindy Ady (TPR), Peter Barr (TrailNet) and Chris Brookes (Alberta Snowmobile Association).

Trans Canada Trail Launches New Features to the Trail Locator

The Trans Canada Trail has been working on developing an online trail mapping system for the past couple of years. The new system based on Google maps allows interested users from around the world to view completed sections of the Trail. Recently the TCT added more features to the Locator to enhance the Trail user experience. Two added features include downloadable maps and GPS coordinates for all sections of completed Trail in Canada.

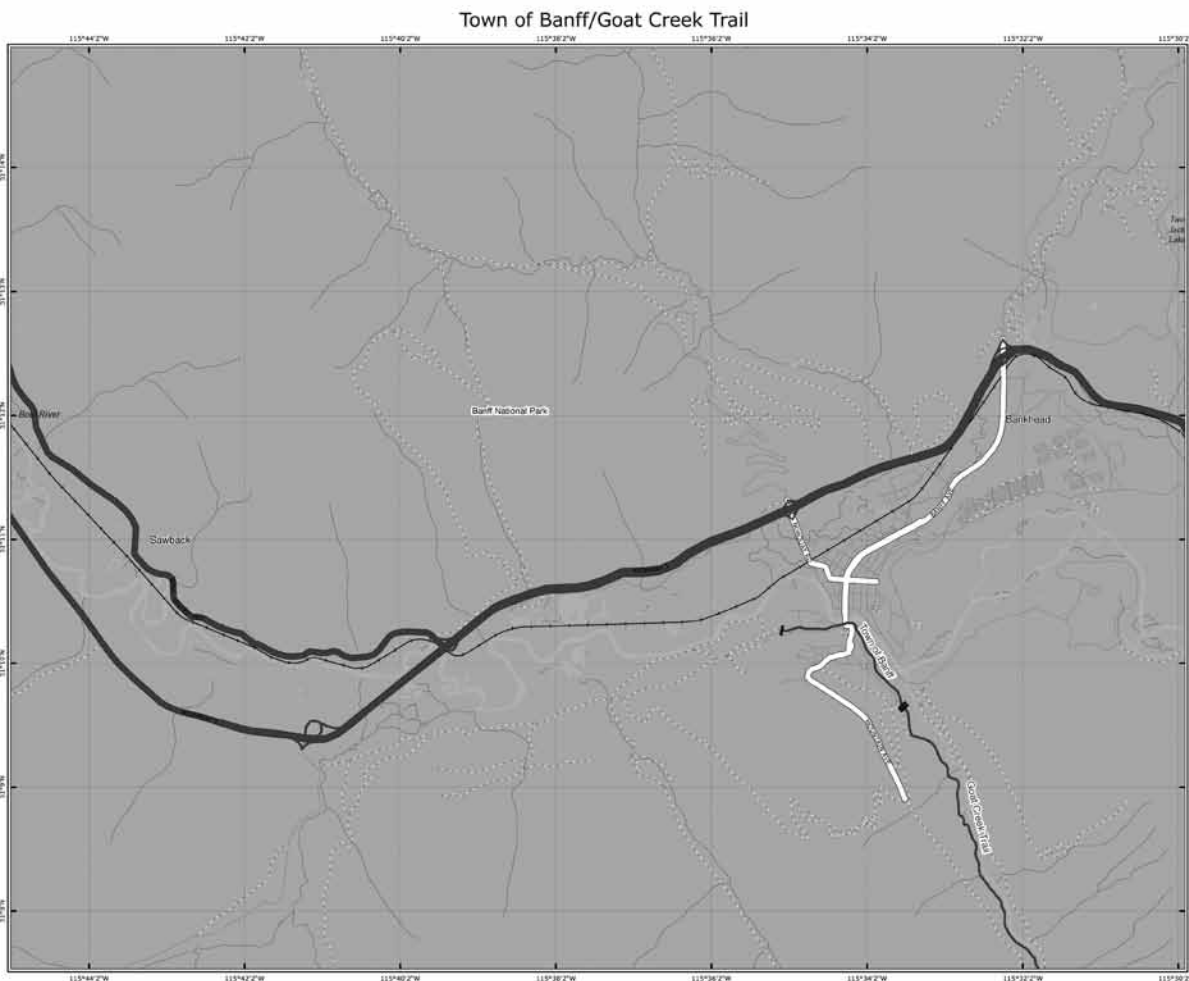
Based on the National Topographical Map Series produced by the Government of Canada, the TCT has segmented the country into approximately 1200 map

sheets. On each of the maps you will find pertinent information about the Trail including its location, pavilions, parks, roads and other useful information about the trail.

Finding and acquiring the maps is easy. Simply go to the Trans Canada Trail website at www.tctrail.ca then click on the map of Canada on the home page which will bring you to the trail locator page. From there select the province which you are looking for and use the zoom controls to focus on a particular area. Below the map you will find a listing of all the segments of the TCT in that area. Clicking on one of those trails will highlight it

in the map frame and provide you with an information box. Clicking on 'more information about this trail' will bring you to another screen that will list the map sheets that cover the section of trail. Depending on how long the trail segment is, there could be multiple maps to download. Select one or all of the maps to download and the transfer will begin. The maps will arrive on your desktop as 11 x 17 inch PDF files in full colour that you can then print.

There is no time like the present to plan your next outing, day trip or multi week adventure. Happy Trails!



Trans Canada Trail sentier Transcanadien



The Trans Canada Trail is the world's longest recreational trail. When completed, it will stretch 21,500 km; linking 3 oceans, 33 million Canadians, 1000 communities and 600 local trails.

Le sentier Transcanadien est le plus long sentier récréatif au monde. Une fois complété, il s'étendra sur 21 500 km, reliant 3 océans, 33 millions de Canadiens, 1000 communautés et 600 sentiers locaux.

For more information - Pour plus d'informations :
visit - visitez www.tctrail.ca

Index No :
820/4NE



This map is intended for Trail users as an aid to navigation on their journey. It is merely a snapshot that represents Trail status to the best of our knowledge but it may contain errors and omissions. It is the duty of any Trail users to verify actual Trail conditions and to thoroughly plan their trip in advance.

Cette carte est destinée aux utilisateurs du sentier qui souhaitent avoir une aide à la navigation lors de leurs randonnées. Elle représente l'état du sentier au meilleur des nos connaissances mais peut contenir des omissions et des erreurs. Il est de la responsabilité de l'utilisateur de vérifier les conditions du sentier et de bien planifier son voyage au préalable.



Trans Canada Trail Appoints a New National Director of Trails

Trans Canada Trail has a new National Director of Trails - Tim Hoskin. Tim joined the Trail staff in mid-November.

Tim has worked for many years in recreation and trails, including managing the high-profile BC Sea to Sky Recreation District. Prior to joining the Trans Canada Trail, Tim served as regional manager with the BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts. In this capacity he managed public recreation on crown land and northern BC through the expansion of recreation and tourism.

“Tim is well respected in his field and has a proven track record and experience in trail building and the development of trail/recreation policies and best practice standards. He is an important addition to our leadership team,” says Deborah Apps, Trans Canada Trail President and CEO. “Tim is a passionate supporter of the Trans Canada Trail and he is already tackling many of the challenges we face as we work towards the completion of the longest recreational trail in the world.”

Working with provincial and territorial trail councils, Tim will lead the development of a master plan for completion of the Trail. Currently Trans Canada Trail has 14,500 kilometres of operational trail, with an estimated 7,000 kilometres of trail yet to build.

Tim is based in Squamish, BC and can be reached at thoskin@tctrail.ca or 1-800-465-3636.

Conceptual Master Trail Plan Underway for Athabasca Landing Trail

Fort Sasakatchewan to Athabasca



Jeff Johnson, MLA for Athabasca-Redwater and Chair of the Recreation Corridors Committee (3rd from left), presents study support funding cheque from Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation to members of the Athabasca Landing Trail Committee (left to right: Nadine Hallett, Linda Strong-Watson, Rob Woito (Chair), Mike Demko, Mayor Colleen Powell, Christine Nelson, Christine Onysty and Richard DeSmet) at the Trans Canada Trail Pavilion in the Town of Athabasca. More on this project in our next newsletter.



Trans Canada Trail - Changes to Eligible Expenses

The Trans Canada Trail Foundation recently changed their policy on grant funding eligible expense categories. Please note that projects may receive up to 20% maximum funding upon approval by the TCT. All projects submitted from June 2008 forward will be reviewed using the new rules. Each eligible item refers to costs related directly to an approved trail project.

The following items are still eligible for funding: Material costs, Labour costs, Equipment rental, Regulatory/safety signage, Work on bridges

The following items are now eligible for funding: Feasibility studies, Engineering studies, Economic impact studies, Trail amenities (rest stops), Look-outs, gazebo, Parking lots, Trail promotion (opening event), Interpretive signage, Information kiosks and trail heads, Licenses/permits (for construction), Property taxes on TCT designated lands prior to development, Project coordinator and site office, GST/PST on eligible expenses.

The following items are still ineligible for funding: General administration costs, Contingencies, Trail maintenance, Personnel contracts for and PR people etc.

Olympic Torch Route

The 2010 Olympic Torch Relay organizers announced in November that the torch will pass through 1020 Canadian communities from October 30 to February 12, 2010. More than 270 of these are on or near the Trans Canada Trail across Canada.

The Trans Canada Trail supports the Olympic Torch Relay and is delighted that the torch will travel some sections of the Trail. Olympic Torch Relay organizers announced that as the torch travels across Canada, special community celebrations will be held in 300 communities and at points of special interest.

For more information about the Torch Relay or how to become a torchbearer, view www.vancouver2010.com/en/torch-relays/-/32700/8amb6a/index.html.

The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society's Trail Care Program 2009

By Chris Lalonde, Trail Care Coordinator

The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society (the Friends) is a non-profit grassroots organization that works with the Provincial Park Staff to benefit Fish Creek Provincial Park through volunteer programs and environmental activities and is governed by a voluntary board of Directors. The Friends mission statement is "To protect, preserve, and enhance the diverse natural and human heritage found in Fish Creek Provincial Park." There are currently over 500 Friends of Fish Creek members, many of whom live close to the Park and visit regularly.

Located in south Calgary, Fish Creek Park stretches over 20 km from the Tsuu T'ina Nation in the west to the Bow River in the east, then from south to north for another 9km along the Bow River and is surrounded by 18 residential communities. The Park is made up of grasslands, wetlands, riparian habitat and boreal forest. This area is home to many species of wild birds and mammals, a variety of aquatic life, and an abundance of wildflowers and plants, in addition to having over 80 archaeological sites. Fish Creek Provincial Park exists along the Fish Creek Valley, and was developed in 1972 through government funds that were set aside by then Premier of Alberta, Peter Lougheed.

Friends programs include Park Watch, Amphibian Monitoring, Beaver Monitoring, Water Quality Testing, Snake Monitoring, and Trail Care. Special one day events include the Open House in April, the Bow River Clean-Up in May and the Purge-the-Spurge weed pull in June. Monthly Speaker's Series presentations educate people about wildlife, nature, recreation, and history, and the new Art in the Park Festival presents people with a variety of ways

to get involved through art and creativity. In 2008, over 4,500 volunteers participated in Friends' programs, and close to 200 of those were Trail Care volunteers.

Trail Care began in 2006 with the planning and development of a single track trail for mountain bikers and hikers. Construction has now reached the Park's westernmost point at Shannon Terrace, which is where we will be working this summer.

The Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society Trail Care program presents a great opportunity to get involved in the community and help to benefit mountain bikers, hikers, wildlife, and the natural landscapes of Fish Creek Provincial Park. Unauthorized, or undesignated, trails are those not indicated on Park maps along with the gravel, shale and paved trails. The Trail Care program is designed to provide cyclists with one exciting intertwining single track trail to enjoy. This single track trail will extend through the entire Park and is estimated to take the next



Team leader David Mills demonstrates how to use a Pulaski to a group of volunteers, many of whom returned several times to help out last summer.



Animal tracks, scat, footprints, and mountain bike tire tread are all evident along this new section of trail at Shannon Terrace.

several years to complete. We are looking for volunteer workers and crew leaders for the Trail Care 2009 season. The development of this single track trail will hopefully reduce the negative impact that cyclists have made on the Park's landscape, wildlife and ecosystems. Some established single track trails in the Park are over 20 years old and remain in use because they are sustainable. The difficulties arise when new, undesignated trails appear each year, and it is essential to curtail the increase in undesignated trails to help preserve the natural beauty of the Park.

When Park visitors, either on foot or on bike, trample or ride

over a patch of vegetation in the Park, they inevitably crush some of the plant's vital cells. This simple action has just facilitated and encouraged more people to take to this new "trail," further trampling sensitive vegetation and threatening the Park's environmental stability. The majority of visitors to Fish Creek Provincial Park live in the surrounding 18 communities and visit the Park regularly. At the rate by which off-trail cycling is increasing, within 20 years the "spider-web" of illegitimate trails crisscrossing through the Park will leave nothing but a tarnished and chopped-up legacy for future generations. The new single track trail and the accompanying education about the negative impact of creating new trails will help to reduce the impact of undesignated trails in the coming years.



Individual volunteers and families got involved in trail building and enjoyed trying out the trail at the end of the day.



The volunteers from Nexen on July 22, 2008, were lots of fun to work with and developed a good section of trail.

Trail Care is a fun and proactive approach to a problem that has no quick and easy solution. Since June of 2006, approximately 2.5 km of single track trail has been developed between Bebo Grove and 37th Street in the west end of the Park. In 2007, we began to raise public awareness about this program, and in 2008 the Friends had an extremely successful season. Each year the Trail Care program secures more support from corporations, individuals and interested groups. 2009 will be my fourth year as Trail Care Coordinator and I am looking forward to once again working with Team Leaders and the volunteers who did such a great job last year: David Mills, Samantha Etherington, Olivier Aubin, Jordan Hynes and Rob Irwin from the Calgary Mountain Bike Alliance.

Last August, we commenced work on a brand new trail section in Shannon Terrace at the west end of the Park. It was the first time since starting work in 2006 that a new single track terrain was developed. The next section of trail work, scheduled for summer 2009, will be to extend the single track down to Bridge 1 and then take it east along the south side of the Creek. Several areas

that have been damaged by erosion and downhill riding, and the resulting soil-displacement, show signs of a negative impact on both the wildlife and vegetation in the area.

Projects this summer will involve continuing the work on the single track trail, doing trail repairs and making certain sections more sustainable. Some unauthorized trail sections between Bridge 1 and Marshall Springs, near the sprawling neighbourhood of Evergreen, have held up well and already provide challenging single track for a large number of riders. We will incorporate the most widely-used trails here and work to improve damaged areas.

The Friends are looking for volunteers to help build this single track trail in the Park this year and could use your help. Trail Care is a great way for families, individuals, businesses, clubs and organizations to get involved and help protect and preserve Fish Creek Provincial Park. Please review the following dates and for more information, contact Chris Lalonde, Trail Care Coordinator, Friends of Fish Creek Provincial Park Society at chris@friendsoffishcreek.org or Tel: 403-238-3841.

2009 Trail Care workdays

- Saturday, June 6, 2009 - 10:00 – 4:00 pm
-

Team Leader training course depending on interest

- Saturday, May 9, 2009 - 9:30 am - 2:30 pm
- Saturday, June 13, 2009 - 9:30 am- 2:30 pm
- Saturday, July 18, 2009 - 9:30 am- 2:30 pm
- Saturday, August 8, 2009 - 9:30 am- 2:30 pm
- Saturday, September 12, 2009 - 9:30 am- 2:30 pm
- Saturday, October 3, 2009 - 9:30 am- 2:30 pm

Bob Johnstone Dedication Ceremony for The Bob Johnstone Trail in Red Deer

By John Cushing, Director – Alberta TrailNet Society

On September 18th, 2008, there was a dedication ceremony for former Alberta TrailNet Board member Bob Johnstone in Red Deer. The ceremony took place at Galbraith Park, just north of 55th Street and 47th Avenue. Here, a 500-metre paved trail has been dedicated to Bob's memory, and named "The Bob Johnstone Trail".

A bronze plaque was unveiled attached to an elegant granite rock. This plaque has a contoured, three-dimensional effect, with a striking and handsome pose of Bob with a natural background of trees and a large rock in a forest. Another similar plaque is situated at the other end of the trail off Waskasoo Crescent just where the Waskasoo Creek meets up with the Red Deer River.

It is only fitting that this portion of the trail that winds by the Waskasoo Creek and meets the Red Deer River Valley is named after Bob, as this is the very area that Bob grew up in as a child and no doubt developed his love for nature and hiking. His house is on the very route, up the hill on Waskasoo Crescent. As we meandered along Bob's Trail, Mary Ellen, his twin sister remembers walk-

ing to school with Bob through these very woods and taking a pedestrian bridge across the Creek to their school.

Bob was an inspiration to us all for his true dedication to the trails movement in Red Deer and area, and to Alberta. He was a founding member of Alberta TrailNet, and the longest standing Board member until he died on Easter Sunday in 2006. He was a long-serving President of CARTS (Central Alberta Regional Trails Society). Mayor Morris Flewwelling of Red Deer called Bob "a champion of Alberta transportation" working with perseverance on trails in Red Deer for 45 years, getting this actual trail developed 30 years ago, and being a driving force behind the Bicycle Master Plan for Red Deer. Councillor Larry Pimm said Bob was "a true environmentalist, he lived the ethic, and cared very much about people and his community." He recalled Bob's love for cross country skiing, founder of the Red Deer Loppet, now aptly renamed the Bob Johnstone Loppet, and his pleasure in preparing for and skiing the Birkie with his dear friends in Red Deer.

There were about 50 people who attended this trail dedication ceremony to Bob's memory, including his friends in the cycling and skiing community, members of council, and the media. Reg Gunson and John Cushing represented Alberta TrailNet. All who attended were emotionally moved by the ceremony, and were gracious to come and honour Bob's true spirit to trails. After the plaque was unveiled, we formed into smaller groups and walked this very trail, now The Bob Johnstone Trail, recounting our vivid memories of Bob.

A special mention of gratitude goes to the City of Red Deer for having such a valuable policy program that remembers valued citizens who have made such significant contributions to their community. A special thanks goes to Ken Lehman, Parks Ecological and Planning Specialist for the City of Red Deer, for coordinating this memorable event, and arranging for the making of the bronze plaque.

When in Red Deer, do visit Galbraith Park, and walk The Bob Johnstone Trail. It will be a moving experience.



Bob Johnstone Trailhead in Galbraith Park, City of Red Deer.



The dedication for the Bob Johnstone Trail took place near Bob's former home in Red Deer.

Moving Forward on the Rocky to Nordegg Trail

By Mike Haugen, Clearwater County



Taunton Bridge

The Rocky to Nordegg Trail, as it is currently called, is a proposed multi-use trail that will connect the Town of Rocky Mountain House and the Hamlet of Nordegg. Traversing the beautiful North Saskatchewan River Valley, the proposed trail will primarily follow an abandoned rail line and will run approximately 120 kilometres.

The overall ambition is that this trail would act as a spine for a much larger trail system that would cater to a great number of users, both motorized and non-motorized. The Rocky to Nordegg trail would be a “lowest common denominator” of sorts that would not only be a fun experience in itself, but would also facilitate access to other trails catering to specific users and offering a higher degree of challenge.

A steering committee is currently working with Armstrong Consulting of Rimbey, Alberta, to develop a concept plan. Members of the Steering Commit-

tee include administration and council representatives from Clearwater County and members from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, Alberta Trail-Net and Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation. A finished plan is expected by late March or early April.

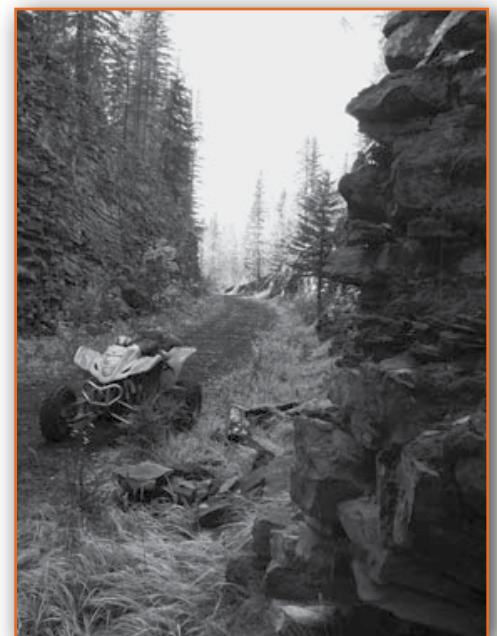
The Steering Committee’s adopted vision statement for the project is: “A managed and sustainable trail experience for motorized and non-motorized users that links our past history to future recreation opportunities and celebrates the beauty of the North Saskatchewan River Valley.”

The statement contains many key elements that will be addressed in the finished plan. From the very initial phases, the Rocky to Nordegg Trail was intended to be a managed trail system. This presents a unique set of challenges, but also presents unique opportunities. The Steering Committee is looking forward to the finished report which should

outline recommendations for overall trail management, including information about liabilities.

Sustainability is also key. Much of the current trail is already being used and formalizing it is seen as a step in preserving the environment. With over 60 identified crossings, the Rocky to Nordegg Trail would provide a sustainable interface between trail users and sensitive environmental areas. This currently does not exist along the route and the impacts of this are very evident in many areas.

To date, an open house has been held and many of the local stakeholders have given input on the project and two public updates have been released outlining some of the progress and issues with the project. For those interested in some of the discussion, Clearwater County has created a Facebook page for the Rocky to Nordegg Trail which contains many photos of the possible routes and discussions from the public interested in the trail.



The Rocky to Nordegg Trail features scenic mountain terrain.



One of the many bridges being upgraded by Crowsnest Pass Quad Squad volunteers.

\$1.5 M Trail Funding Creates Economic Boost for Communities

In 2008, the Government of Canada created the \$1-billion Community Development Trust to help provinces and territories assist communities, organizations and workers facing economic hardship caused by the current volatility in global financial and commodities markets. Alberta's allocation from the Community Development Trust is \$104 million. Two trail projects have received a three year total of \$1.5 M in funding support under this program – the Peace River Trail and the Crowsnest Pass trails.

Peace River Trail

The 110-kilometre section of the historic Peace River Trail connected Fort Edmonton to the Peace River region and ultimately the gold rush in the Klondike. The trail has been utilized over the years by trappers, settlers, hikers, trail riders, and more recently by motorized users.

The Peace River Trail will receive \$700,000 to improve trail grade and surface, ensure improved sight lines, upgrade bridges and realign the trail in some areas to a more sustainable location. General degradation of the trail surface, especially in recent wet years, and tree blow down from several severe wind storms have made the trail impassable in some areas. Parking lots

and other trail services such as signage, washrooms and camping areas will also be constructed as part of the project.

Crowsnest Pass Trails

The Crowsnest Pass and Rocky Mountain area of southwestern Alberta has approximately 1,200 kilometres of recreation trails utilized by a number of recreation groups. An estimated 50,000 people will access the trails in this region this year.

The Crowsnest Pass Trails project will receive \$800,000 over the next three

years to reconstruct and upgrade trail infrastructure in the Castle area that has been damaged recently by flood and forest fires. This includes rebuilding trail grades, rerouting the trail to more sustainable alignments where necessary, installing drainage features, and repairing or replacing trail bridges and other trail infrastructure.

Both projects are to be completed by March 2011. Partnerships with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development will ensure infrastructure upgrades are consistent with the management goals and regulatory requirements on public lands. These projects will create jobs, enhance tourism development, and provide economic benefits to the region. They will also result in reduced environment impacts and more sustainable trail systems.



Construction underway on the Peace River Trail.

Alberta TrailNet welcomes new member to the team

James Clark has recently been contracted to work for Alberta TrailNet. James will spend the next two years working as the provincial trail map coordinator and as a project coordinator on the development of the TCT through the province.

James has spent the past 16 years working on trails throughout the country. Originally from New Brunswick, James was the manager for trail construction and maintenance for that province, where he spent considerable time working with trail groups, and helping them find solutions to local concerns. For the past 5 years, James has been the Director of Trail Development for the Trans Canada Trail. Wanting to get back to his roots, James decided that working with communities and organizations to support local projects is really the way to advance progress on trails and he looks forward to working with all of those interested in trails in the Province.



The May Lake Trail: The Complexity of Saving a Historic Trail

By Cal Rakach, Alberta Off-Highway Vehicle Association –Technical Director

I fell in love with this trail back in 1984 just after moving to Cold Lake. My first trip on it was on a brand new shiny Ski Doo 447. The following year, with the eagerness to explore all this bush around my new home, I was talked out of buying a dirt bike and into trying out one of these goofy, balloon tired 3-wheelers. Back then it was a trail seemingly designed for a sport quad with its smooth sweeping route from Cold Lake to May Lake.

Of course that was 25 years ago and the world has changed...except for me - I still love my sport quads. It's the usual story - as population expands and popularity of OHVing hits an all time high, the impact on the May Lake Trail was becoming ever more evident. On top of the need for a management program to address the user issues, a far greater threat was looming.

The route of the trail dissects the extensive Imperial Oil heavy oil Mineral Surface Lease (MSL) and to date their operations had been to the west of the trail. In 2004 I knew the day would come when Imperial's development would extend eastward, threatening the trail's existence. Saving the May Lake Trail became a personal priority.

My work began with conducting a trail inventory to document its current location and state. With this information I was able to secure incredible support from my local Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) land manager, Dave Lind. Dave went through the arduous process of putting a Consultative Notation (CNT) on the trail which created the requirement for any industrial activities planned to occur in the vicinity of the trail to inform the CNT holder of the proposed

development. The CNT does not prevent the industrial development but does flag the trail's existence and creates a notification mechanism.

Further work needed to be done to enter dialogue with Imperial Oil which turned out to be extremely fruitful and a win-win for both parties. For me, working with Imperial provided water quality and sound data that Imperial was required to monitor for their operating licences, and it gave Imperial an opportunity to work with the local community to address the trail management issues they had to deal with by virtue of the trail being on their MSL.



Cal Rakach and friends enjoy a day out on the May Lake Trail near Cold Lake, Alberta.



In Memorium: Brian Simmons

By Richard DeSmet, Rainbow Equitation Society



We are deeply saddened that there is an empty saddle in our corral. On March 2, Brian Simmons passed away. Brian was 47 years old and he leaves behind his wife Cori, four children and two grandchildren.

Brian was an avid horseman and hiker, and for over four years he was the President of Rainbow Equitation Society. Brian was instrumental in the development and the construction of the facilities on the Society's property. He was in charge of the Society's annual trail ride, barbeque and silent auction. In 2008, Brian lobbied for and organized the 1st Annual Stollery Children's Hospital fundraiser for our Society. Members raised over \$8,400. Brian and Cori raised over half of that amount themselves.

One of Brian's great passions was the protection of the provincial Natural Areas and the Nature Conservancy property that our Society stewards. He will always be remembered for his 'Won't Back Down' approach to the protection of these sites. This passion and approach extended to the protection of the riding and hiking trail system that criss-crossed through our community.

Brian supported the Society's commitment to the Trans Canada Trail Foundation, Alberta TrailNet, the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Landing Trail Bridge Initiative. For the past few years Brian supplied and delivered the goodies that went into the bird feeding station at the RES property. He spent hours watching the hundreds of birds that visited the station as well as a very special squirrel.

Brian will be missed as a friend horseman, worker, organizer, as an environmentalist and steward of the land. Thank you Brian, we will pick up the torch.

In Memorium: Albert Beck



Alberta TrailNet and its provincial partners wish to recognize and honor Albert Beck, NE Regional Director for the Alberta Snowmobile Association (ASA). Albert was one of the victims of tragic avalanche accidents over the past few months. He was on the ASA Board for many years and contributed to many projects, including inventory and distribution of the ASA signage program. His death is a true loss to the snowmobile and trail communities. Our sincere condolences to Albert's family and many friends.

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PRINTING
Emerson • Clarke
Printing Corporation



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Many thanks to all our members and donors who have pledged their support to the Alberta TrailNet Society. Not only is your support a big boost to TrailNet financially, but your ongoing support benefits all trail enthusiasts and will help to continue to build Alberta's provincial trail network, including the Trans Canada Trail.

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